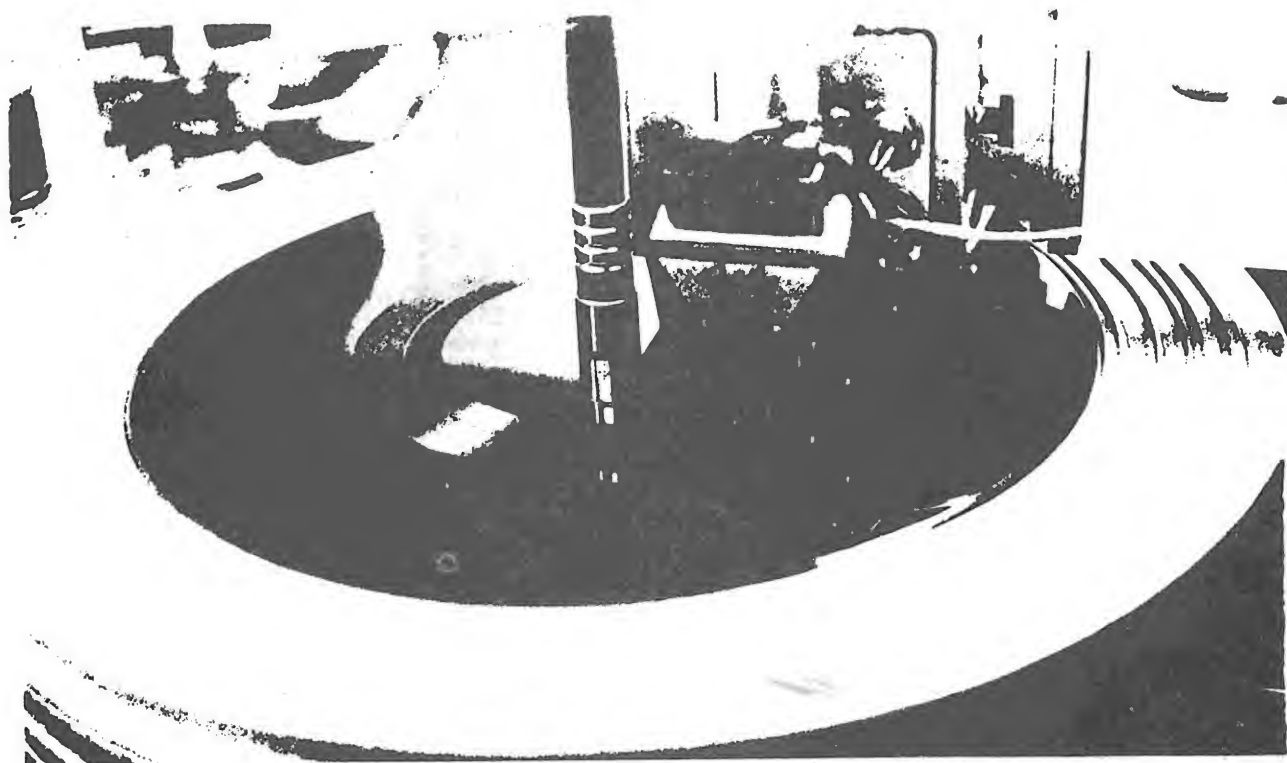


AFTER HOURS

1



THE
RAINCOATS



Scrittura Politica

Source
Fervent

WHO'S IN
CONTROL?

+MORE

AFTER HOURS

Compiled by Jon and Charles.
Contributions from John Lipnicki and Soubrette Perverse.
Invaluable help from the Raincoats and Scritti Politti.
Support by James Fox.
Photographs by Jo, Neil Andersen, Shirley O'Loughlin, and
Neil Clifford.

After Hours 1 is dedicated to Scritti Politti who are
trying so hard.

Inspiration from Sniffin' Glue, Dirt, and Black Dwarf.

It was easy assembling the material for this magazine but
hard to find anywhere to get it produced. All the photo-
copying and printing places in London that we tried were
far too expensive. Special thanks to Lynne who has enabled
us to get it out at this price.

If anyone would like to send anything for possible inclusion
or otherwise this is the address:-

After Hours
c/o ~~3, Mowbray St.~~
~~9, Redon Street,~~
London ~~W11~~. N.W.6.

Beat music is not just a good beat. Rock'n'roll is not
just entertainment. To some it's just a job, to others it's
just a way to make a lot of money fast and have a few
laughs on the way. The adulation, the sex, the glamour - the
whole star thing.

There are a few groups who don't think of beat music in
these terms. People are trying to change things. These are
the people After Hours is interested in.

Rock'n'roll doesn't have to be so pathetic.

SUPPORT LOCAL BANDS

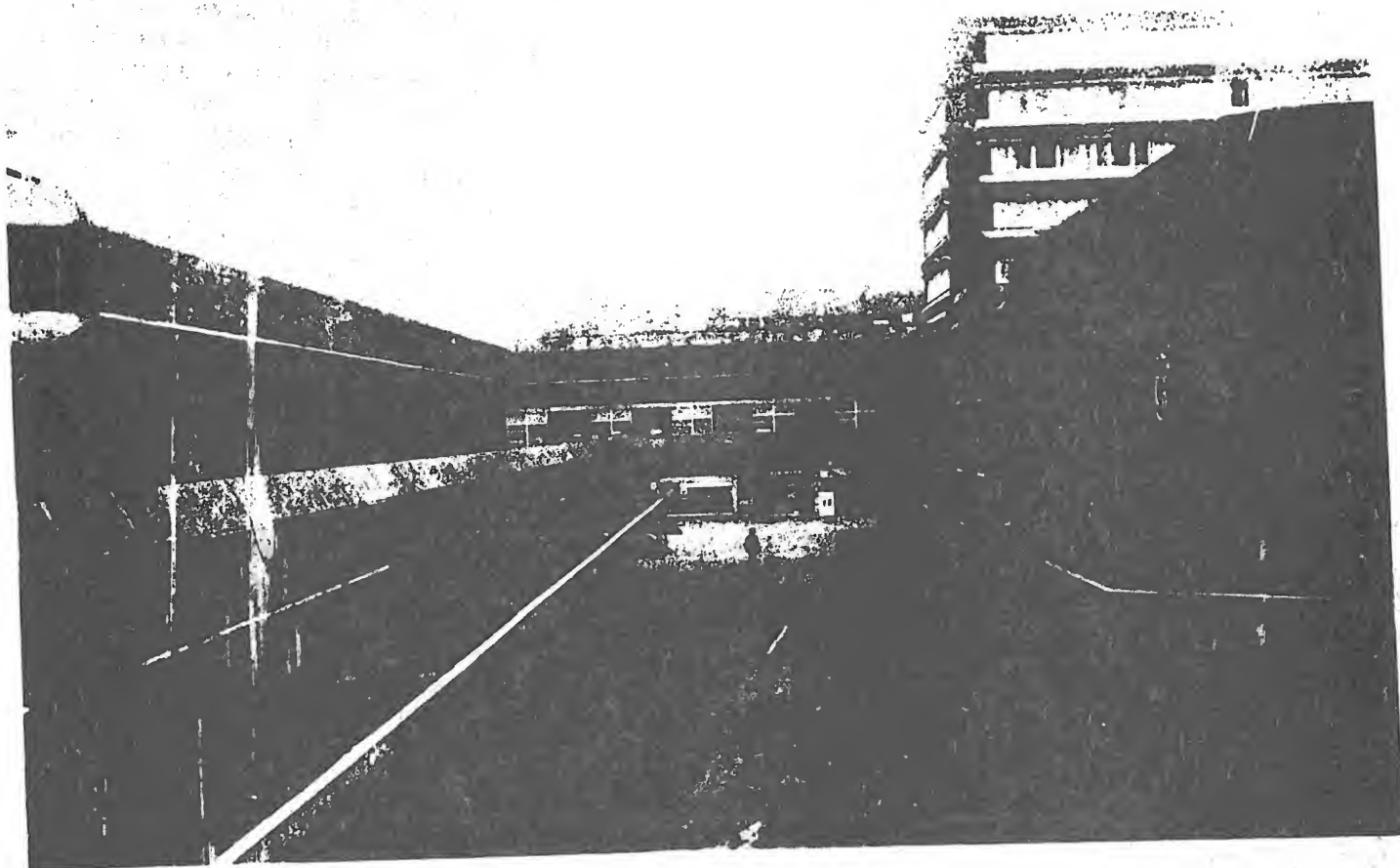
SOUBRETTE PERVERSE

ARTICLE BY SOUBRETTE PERVERSE FOR 'AFTER HOURS'

If this article is to serve any purpose then it's to urge people not to give in to the archaic Rock'n'Roll traditions (read 'cliches'), and to form their own groups, no matter how talentless they think they are.

Soubrette Perverse come from Sunderland and consist (at the moment) of Philip Topel who plays bass and has done since Christmas, Peter Sumby who plays electric guitar, and Neil Clifford who sings in an appealing monotone. Phil also owns a 50 watt combo which is our one piece of amplification equipment. This is our P.A. (HA HA). We formed in late December 1978 because we wanted to do something. We see expansion of our line-up as inevitable as soon as we find people with the same ideals as us, because the Bass Vocals Guitar line-up is inhibiting us, and there's no room to experiment. We'd like a drummer and maybe another guitarist. We try to rehearse quite often and soon hope to be ready to play gigs (in a few months). The trouble is there aren't any gigs to play.

There aren't many new groups in the Sunderland/Newcastle area who want to operate outside the normal Rock'n'Roll structures. In fact the North East seems to be the last bastion of heavy metal. Heavy metal is very popular round here. We formed as an escape from that, urged on by what the Mekons (etc.) were doing ('If they can do it, we can'). Original influences c'est typique - Clash, Pistols, Buzzcocks and more lately Velvet Underground. The Rough Trade Organisation, Scritti Politti, the Fall etc. etc. are all inspiring cos they show strength and independence.



Soubrette Perverse continued from other page..

These are the only people we feel any empathy with. We certainly can't relate to the Clash or Buzzcocks anymore. The proof that submitting to Big Business leads to impotence is shown in recent offerings from yesterday's rebels. They make good rock music, and that's second best. They once seemed dangerous. We thought they were going to break down the barriers between 'pop star' and 'humble fan'. Most of them do tricks on T.O.T.P. every week, pandering to plastic pop culture. Big Record Empires can't see beyond making money and don't give a fuck about their captives, and only see them in terms of marketable product.

But there's no time to despair because this is where we come in (that is you and us). We can all complete the shift of power from Capitalist Record Companies to we, the mere people, if we are open and receptive. The only way that we can see that that can be done (and it can be done) is not to submit to them. They aren't necessary. Through co-operation and working in mutual benefit (SYMBIOSIS!!) we can undermine the power of the Industry. Previous mistakes show D.I.Y is the only step forward.

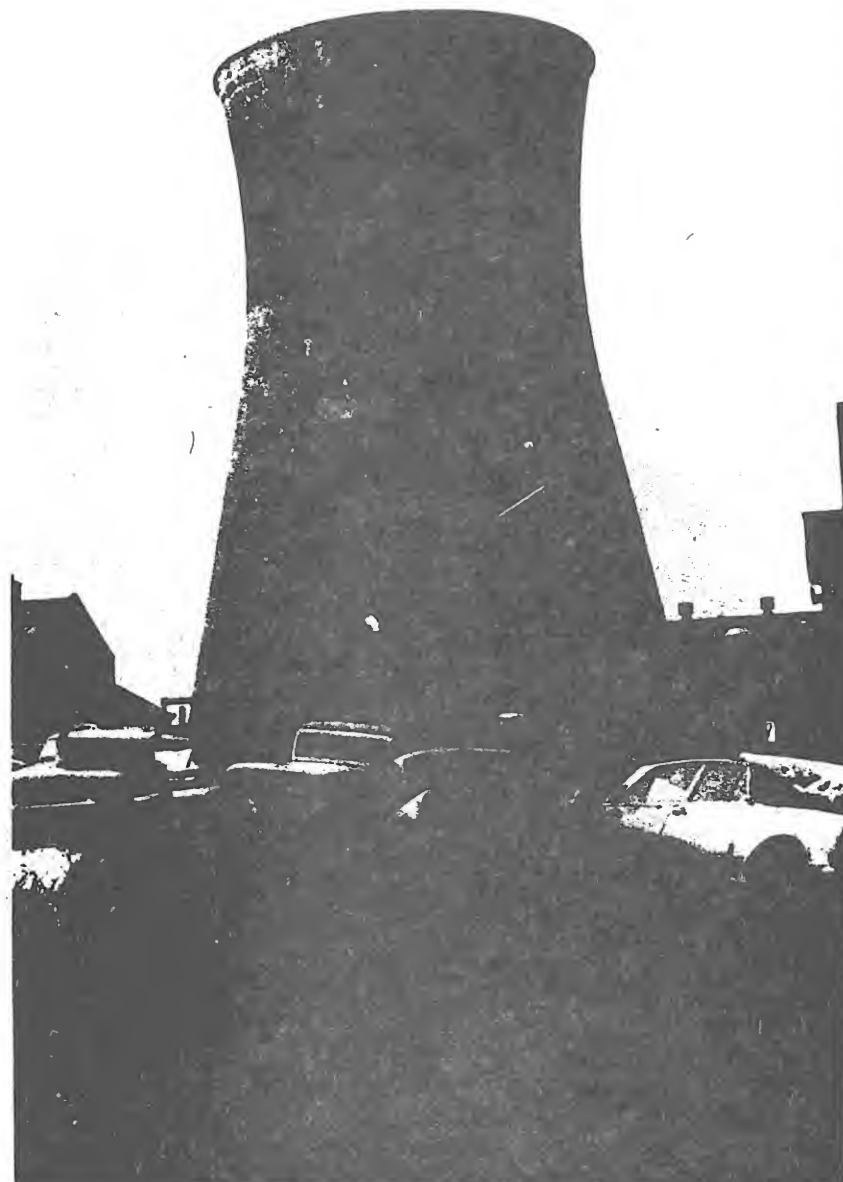
Rock'n'Roll, as it's presented by the established Music Biz, is all about chart success, pop stars, fashion, advertising and competition. It's absolutely pathetic and it certainly isn't rock'n'roll (or maybe it is! Maybe what we all want to do ISN'T rock'n'roll.) We want to eliminate all of that, because it's pointless.

The North-East has the potential for a thriving co-operative local scene of people sharing gigs, equipment etc, helping each other out, and trying to do something different with pop music, without being elitist. That's why it's important for us to contact people in our area with the same musical/political intentions. Whilst we try to sort ourselves out musically (we've really only just started) we thought the most immediate way to reach people, and to voice our naive opinions would be to start a magazine. That's what we're going to do next.

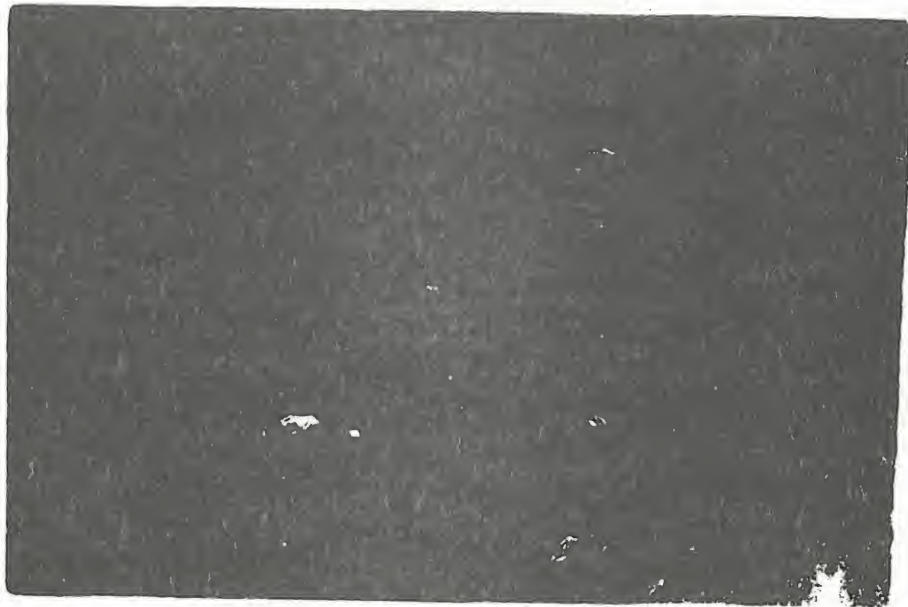
Peter Soubrette and Philip Soubrette are still at school. Neil Soubrette is at college. This may or may not have a bearing on the music. There must be lots of young groups all over the country in exactly the same position as us; a couple of guitars, maybe one amp and bags of idealism fuelling enthusiasm. We mustn't give up. With co-operation and help from people who care (the sort of people this magazine is about) we can achieve some of what we set out to do. Rough Trade care, Scritti Politti care, Red Crayola care, and Charles cares. He gave us the opportunity to write this because of a letter we wrote to the Scrits. It's because of people like this, and through belief in ourselves that we can break down all the barriers between the performers and the audience. All you've got to do is form your own group, and if you're prepared to do that there's no end to what we can achieve through co-operation.

THE END by Neil, Phil and Peter

The photographs are postcards from Sunderland. All they're intended to do is give an impression of our environment (which isn't much different to anybody else's). We sent them because we wanted to enclose visual and their purpose is that they give a fair representation of Sunderland (a shipbuilding graveyard) and our environment must have some sort of effect on our music and attitudes.



The Music Industry has a £2.3 billion annual turnover. In the U.K., whose influence far outweighs its 6% share of the world market, the industry is dominated by five corporations—E.M.I., C.B.S., Warner Communications Inc., Polygram and R.C.A. WHICH BETWEEN THEM HAVE 66% of the album market and 66% of the singles market.



They own the pressing plants, the distribution chains, the music publishing companies, the electronics firms and more besides. E.M.I. own the major cinema circuit in the U.K. as well as half of Thames T.V. squash courts, and bingo halls. C.B.S. own one of the giant U.S T.V. networks as well as publishers and musical instrument makers. R.C.A. owns N.B.C. one of the other two T.V. networks, besides being active in satellite communications and weapons technology. Warner Communications control Warner Brothers films and New York Cosmos football team. Polygram (Polydor and Phonogram) are owned by Philips and Siemens, two giant European electronics firms, and are active in all areas of entertainment.

An understanding of the thinking and operations of the music industry is provided in an essay by Leslie Hill, Director, Group Music, E.M.I. Ltd. who admits: 'The ever increasing complexity of the business, combined with intense competition, demands a degree of professionalism and technical and commercial sophistication undreamed of even 15 years ago.'

This professionalism involves gambling with increasingly high stakes. With the cost of recording an album ranging from £15-60,000, a company may have to invest £200,000 plus before any artist sells records on any large scale. Hill claims, moreover, that of some 2750 singles released in 1978 only 400 will make Top 50.

In addition artists are pushing for bigger and better deals, particularly once they have a track record. Arthur Mogull, president of United Artists told Business Week: 'I used to think to think artists signed contracts based on personal relationships they have with their company, but I've concluded that it almost always comes down to money'.

The corporations allow others to create trends and then they buy them out—punk being only the latest of this phenomenon. The corporations insist they do not control the market, that there is always room for the successful independent. For a while this is true but always, somewhere along the manufacturing/distribution/marketing line, the majors are taking their cut.

Do they have an unfair advantage? Hill comments: 'Good repertoires, although the main ingredient, is only part of any record company's recipe for success. The ability of a company to market and promote effectively is almost as important as the basic repertoire strength. It is not always the best repertoire which makes the charts. Careful campaign planning, image-building and dedicated record-plugging often give an ordinary record a chart placing over a better record less professionally handled.' It's worth mentioning that the U.S Monopolies Commission is currently investigating C.B.S., W.E.A., and others.

This piece has been lifted from the N.M.E. I think it's interesting and revolting. The way these corporations work is nothing to do with the way I think about music and, above all, just completely money orientated. What have they got to do with exciting thought-provoking music. They're just interested in money and more money to pay for more

(Contd.)

WHO REALLY RUNS ROCK'N'ROLL ?

limousines, cigars, luxury penthouses, flash clothes and cocktails. Who are the suckers ? Next time you buy a Polydor or E.M.I. record, or go to the Hammersmith Odeon or local Mecca think whose pocket your money is going into. To me C.B.S., W.E.A. etc are just a pile of shit. What do you think ?

Chief Executive, EMI Music, The World. "The imperative object of EMI operations is simply to achieve unquestioned worldwide supremacy in our business. (This) organisation... will, in my opinion, provide us with relevant, unified, worldwide leadership."

THE KIND of megacloth that a corporation like EMI Music can wield has been demonstrated time and again, but nowhere more forcibly than in their promotion campaigns for TV albums, a game of high risks and high rewards reserved for the really high rollers. K-Tel and other merchandising companies may have pioneered the field, but within two years EMI had grabbed a hefty 26% share of a market which this year will gross and estimated £35 million.

Remember also that EMI Music provides only 50% of the profits of the much larger parent conglomerate, EMI Ltd., six letters which signify the largest multinational corporation in the leisure entertainment field — by a vast margin, their profits may have dipped this year from a peak £64.7 millions to £25.9 millions, but this must be regarded as little more than a minor setback for this giant enterprise.

No matter how you choose to entertain yourself, you're fairly sure to be putting money in EMI's pocket. Their film division, for instance, not only makes films, but also owns Elstree Studios and controls the 284 cinema screens of the ABC circuit.

The leisure group control theatres, bingo halls, hotels, discos, marinas, sports and social clubs, bowling alleys, golf courses and more besides.

If you go out to eat at an Angus Steak House, a Golden Egg Restaurant, a Tennessee Pancake House or visit an Ice Cream parlour — you're an EMI consumer.

They own the Blackpool Tower, and their property holdings in the centre of London alone are worth millions. The Mecca Ballroom in Leicester Square is theirs; also the Prince of Wales Theatre, the Talk of the Town nightclub and The London Experience.

London TV viewers might wish to know that they also have a 50% interest in Thames TV.

EMI claim their music profits have been cut drastically due to the rise of home taping. But EMI is also a major supplier of blank tape in Europe, so they win both ways.

Wherever you look, the EMI Empire seems to be there — quietly grinding along, shaping and profiting from all forms of popular entertainment.

The business sucks; 'oh yeah, I've heard it before and uh...yeah I agree but well I'm going to buy the new Banshees single 'cos it's really great and well I buy my albums from Virgin 'cos they're pretty cheap, and I eat McDonald's hamburgers 'cos they're so plastic and uh punky y'know''

SHIT YOU FUCKING SUCKERS,
YEAH YOU'VE TAKEN THE BAIT,
I'VE TAKEN THE BAIT....

TOO MANY TIMES....

LOOK the alternatives aren't easy(not comfortable)you're gonna have to sacrifice things.
Right ? uh...well...

Look, consider the alternative, a music(and more)scene(no more emphasis on business)where you and me, the musicians and the fans(we can all be both)have control,and aren't financing those cunts,who sell records just like they sell munitions,promote gigs just like they make chemicals.

OH FUCK,think what these phrases mean for a minute.

THINK about your new Clash L.P.

THINK about war

Think about having your legs blown off

Think about all the unpleasant reality you've been conditioned to laugh off by the system....and

remember that the system is E.M.I, is Mecca,is W.E.A,is Straight Music is Virgin(most disgusting of all, the hip face of the financially obsessed scum we fondly refer to as the industry).

The system isn't just politics, isn't just the government.It is all too often your entertainment,your transport,your food,and as long as it comes in a picture sleeve we take it.So think about,think about how much control you have over your own life,think about it

EMI RECORDS UK

Labels: (Owned) Capitol, Columbia, Double Up, EAP (European Artist & Repertoire), EMI, EMI America, EMI Greenleaves, EMI Intl, Encore, Executive, HMV, Harvest, Nonesuch, One Up, Parlophone, Regal Zonophone, Starline, Stateside, Telleman, Waverley; (Licensed) Ariola America, Big Bear, Bronze, Coral, Fantasy, Hitville, Island group, MAM, MC, MCA, Motown, Mowest, Prodigal, Purple, RAK, Rare Earth, Retreat, Salsoul, Star; United Artists group; (Distributed) MFP, Magnet, Private Stock, World.

E.M.I. took over United Artists a couple of weeks ago.

THE RAINFOATS

AH: Do you have any specific plans ?

Ana: Play gigs and make music.

AH: What about records?

Gina: We want to make an E.P. with three songs, maybe four.

Vicki: Rough Trade have agreed to do it.

AH: When will that be coming out?

Ana: Near future, three months?

AH: What songs are going to be on it?

Palmolive: "In Love", "Adventures Close To Home", "Fairytale in the Supermarket."

AH: What's the one that you start with?

Palmolive: "Black and White". Do you want the names of all our songs?

AH: No, I just wondered what that one was.

Gina: Go on, have them.

Palmolive: "Black and White", "In Love", "Life on the Line", "Adventures Close to Home", "Fairytale in the Supermarket", "You're a Million", "No Side To Fall In", "Without Looking At Me".

Gina: We only have seven songs at the moment, but soon we shall have eight or nine or ten.

AH: Are you going to do any more covers, like "Peggy Sue"?

Ana: That was just a joke.

Vicki: Due to shortage of material.

AH: How do you write your songs?

ANA: Each one has her different way.

VICKI: Two of us joined after they'd been going for sometime, so they already had five songs.

PALMOLIVE: One of us comes up with an idea and then we just put it together.

GINA: Basically it just stems from one person, then everybody else says what they like. But it's taken me a year to learn how to cope with that... now I'm just beginning to understand what criticisms or comments you can make about it. When I first started playing I just used to stand in the corner and everyone else would talk about it. I didn't understand how they could think of anything to say about it.

AH: Are any of you musicians, like trained musicians?

VICKI: I'm a trained musician. It gets in the way. The problem with me has been the other way round—trying to get rid of it.. forget about it. It's easier to have ideas when you haven't too much theory in your head because it restricts your imagination. In order to put into practise your ideas you have to know your instrument but not too much.

AH: How do you feel about rock'n'roll, -playing gigs, doing interviews, making records etc?

GINA: It's nice at this stage.... probably get worse.

AH: Do you want to go with it and just let it happen?

GINA: Yeah but we want to be in control.

PALMOLIVE: We want to be comfortable, we don't want to get into a situation where we're sick of it.

AH: Are you interested in setting up alternatives to the rock industry as it is now? Like Rough Trade, etc..

ANA: That's what we want to do. But we can only say what we want to do now but some people have really got away with doing their own things and I think it's really good.... because I think it was really difficult before, to do something like that, maybe people didn't try very hard. But people do get away with things that they do themselves.

GINA: What do you mean 'get away with it'.

ANA: Not get away, but succeed with. People like Scritti Politti, the Desperate Bicycles and the Television Personalities.

(Contd.)

AH: BUT NOT MANY PEOPLE.....You see all these bands like the Gang of Four, just signing up. They've been so independent, but when somebody actually offers them money....

VICKI: But there is something to be said for making an intervention, as it is called, like going into a big company with the knowledge that you're going to be ripped off, and knowing what you are doing, and hoping to use your power to change it...or not be sucked into it. Usually it's very difficult. It's a bit idealistic.

ANA: I think it's a challenge. Because it's very difficult if you have got a good offer and you think that money is going to help you out with stuff and not have to work.

VICKI: If your aim is to reach a large audience then that's the way to do it obviously.

AH: Is it better to get a large audience...get filtered down into a large audience or get right through to small audiences. If you come out of the radio to a large audience you're not going to be much different to everyone else.

VICKI: No, I agree, obviously you get absorbed into big structures like that, but if you stay in small structures then you don't get noticed at all sometimes.

AH: Well if you influence twenty people a lot..if those twenty people do things...

VICKI: Well why not Fifty people. The two extremes are just as bad as each other-remaining an alternative and being obscure....like we were talking about Rough Trade today- they've got the alternative of being a minor Warner Brothers and trying to reach a lot of people, or remaining an alternative which is isolated from everybody else, which is a hippy thing.

GINA: It's not that isolated.

VICKI: No they're not, but they're trying to strike a balance between the two.

AH: If you compare all these people to how they were a year ago they're much bigger but still independent. Surely it's better just to try it slowly.

GINA: I ^{think} that's basically how we feel about it. It's fairly intentional...the fact that we haven't charged into things..is the way we want to do it really.

AH: If you sign up and say you're going to try and do something about it, it seems as though you're accepting everything's wrong but you'll try and do a bit against it. It seems better not to ever accept..to keep going without.

VICKI: Right but I still respect in a way people who do the opposite and still ~~think~~ think they're doing something. It depends what their attitude is.

AH: People's attitudes change when they've got a record contract and lots of money. Nearly every time.

ANA: But it makes you think that everyone potentially would become like that..I think it's a sad thing in a way...it happens to everyone.



AH: Look at Pink Floyd. Once upon a time they were outrageous and exciting and independent now they're just a sort of multi million dollar corporation. Look at Patti Smith.
ANA: It's a very difficult thing.

PALMOLIVE: But you need money to do things....if you want to organise a gig with your own atmosphere and everything you like, then you're going to need money-so if you don't like big record companies, then you're going to ^{have to} find something else.

ANA: I think people can be more independent than they used to be, years ago, and I think now people can stand a bit more firmly.

VICKI: I don't think it's necessary to do everything completely on your own like Scritti Politti have. It's a good thing that they've done it to show that it can be done. But I don't think you should say that everyone should do it like this or else they're selling out. You can do it through somebody like Rough Trade. Small labels like Fast or whoeverall the groups they started off by signing-very independent-they're all ending up moving on, from there to big companies. Which is a shame, because it's like the small companies are just helping to be a springboard. They're ending up being a filter for all the best groups to go the big companies.

AH: Or else they end up like Stiff, which is like a small company wanting to make money rather than a large company wanting to make money-not much difference.

VICKI: That's where Rough Trade is pretty good.

GINA: They only make enough money to do the next thing. To keep it going.

ANA: They don't have ^{as much} money. They just have it going.

AH: It depends what you do with it (money). If you give it to E.M.I. you're just financing their South African chemicals firms or something.

ANA: It's difficult not to give any money to those people....You can do it (a record) on your own but you've got to have ^{it} pressed somewhere and that place is going to belong to Island or E.M.I. or I don't know whose these pressing plants are.

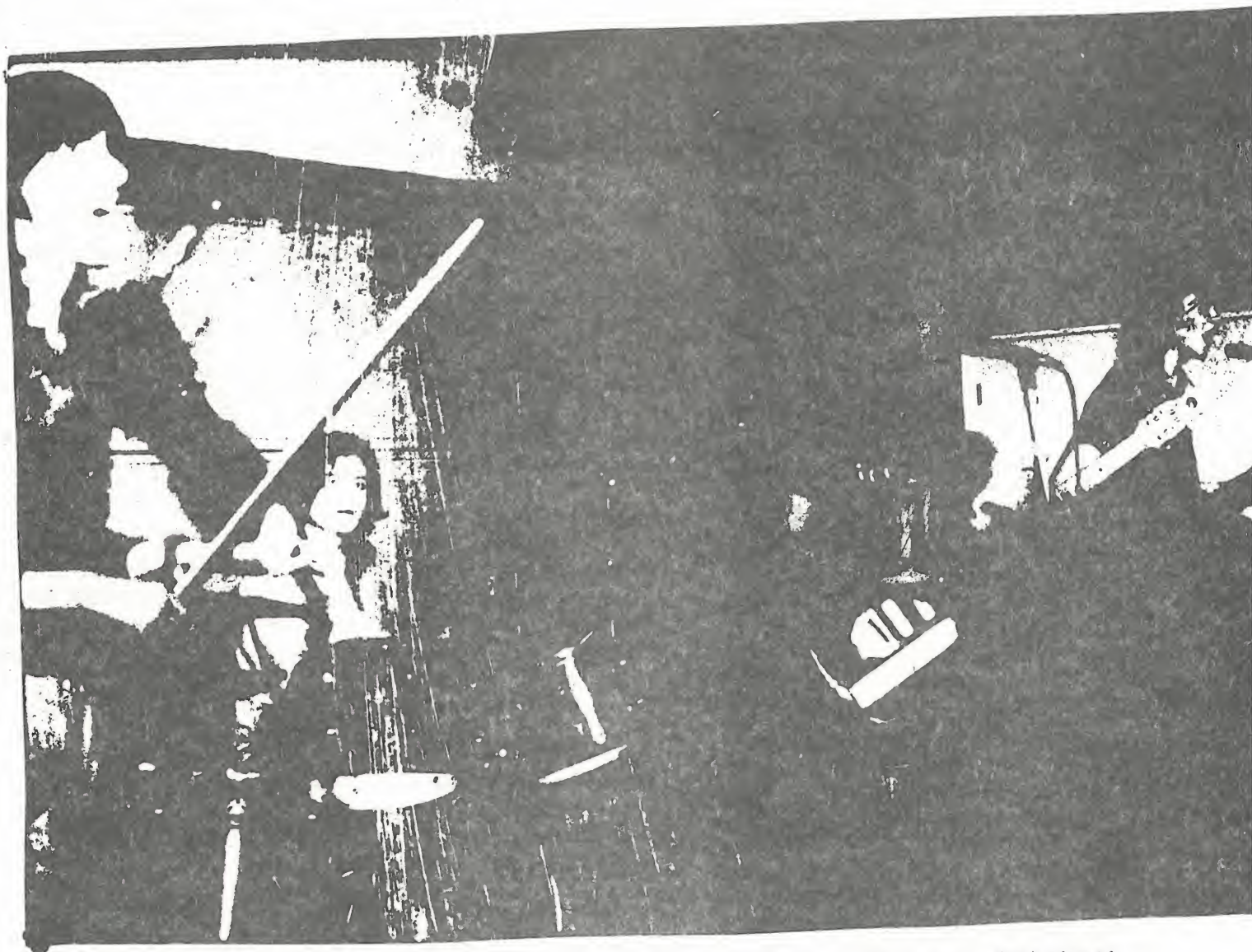


PHOTO BY NEIL ANDERSON.

contd.

Ah: Not if you set up your own pressing plant..

ANA: And if you don't you have to wait months and months.

Ah: It seems if you don't put your money into records you still go out and buy...everything one owns is through big companies. You might have managed to get your record out independently but you buy bread from them...

ANA: It's just that signing with a big record company they start hassling you to do what they want.

VICKI: I think having a pressing plant would really be an important step, because that would really take control into the hands of the small companies and you wouldn't have to go through the large ones. It could be done.

Ah: How do you feel about image. Most people have had really strong images-like the Rolling Stones.

ANA: We don't fabricate one, we are very much what we are.

Ah: Before everyone used to worry about their image.

ANA: Not very long before. The Clash had an image-army fatigues, all the band wearing the same clothes.

VICKI: I don't think that we're imageless. I think that we've got one, but it's not a contrived one.

Ah: What image do you think that you have?

VICKI: Asexual.

GINA: Tatty.

PAIMOLIVE: Dirty.

VICKI: What image do you think that we have?

Ah: Well I didn't really spot one.

GINA: Either we weren't trying very hard or we haven't got one.

ANA: We want to be this way but other people through their image..they want to portray part of what they feel they are. If you dress up in leather you want to look tough and rough. Because maybe you feel you ought to be tough or you are tough.

GINA: You always wanted a motorbike.

PAIMOLIVE: Do you know about any Hondas for sale?

Ah: What would you say you were like to someone who hadn't seen you?

ANA: We've been compared to so many people that I start to think that we're not like any of them. Which is a good thing.

VICKI: People have to compare you to something because they like to categorise.

Ah: Which is useful, I suppose, in some ways because if you're writing this for someone who doesn't know anything about the Raincoats...because people just don't go and see a band that they know nothing about...a lot of people don't.

ANA: What do you think, you see it from the outside.

Ah: That's what everyone does when they write; they say 'this is a cross between..

VICKI: Blah, blah and blah

Ah: I thought it would be a bit more interesting to see what you thought.

VICKI: It always springs to mind what other people have said-Patti Smith, Slits and early Velvet Underground-that's totally arbitrary.

Ah: Are you still interested in combining music with theatre? There was that thing in Zigzag.

GINA: That's all misquotes. Have you heard of performance art?

Ah: Where people roll about on the floor.

GINA: We were interested at one point in playing in places where we didn't necessarily have wholly music. In this room above the Chippenham we, one evening, did this thing with two blokes who were performance artists, who did roll about on the floor and through them in fact we toured Poland..but that idea is still one that's interesting but it's not exactly combining music with theatre.

ANA: It would be good, because some people do some really good things and it would be a way of having variety.

Ah: To have more than one thing at once.

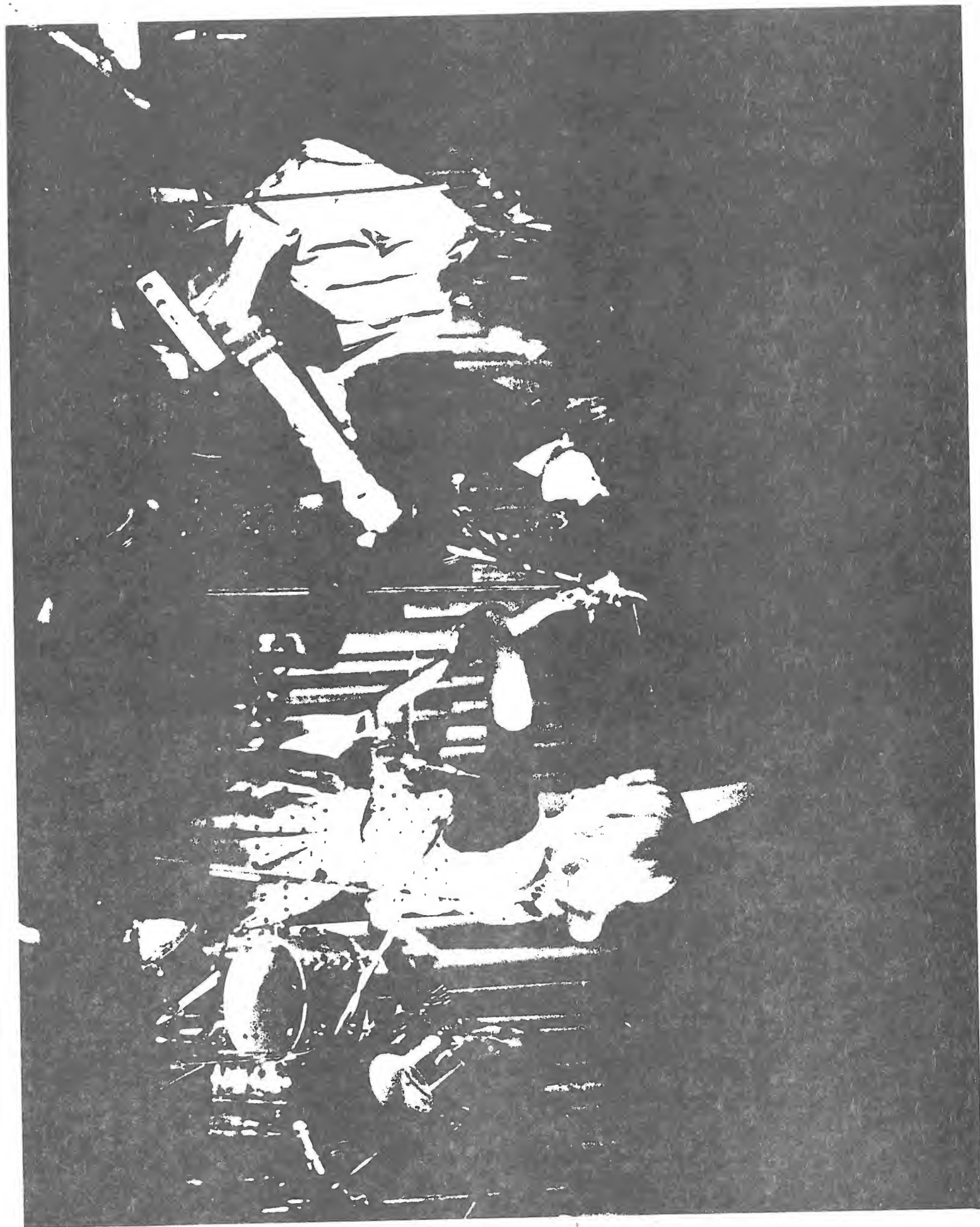
GINA: Not necessarily more than one thing at once but more than...different elements involved in one evening.

ANA: Instead of making just like a gig. That's what I thought I was going to see at Public Image..it was just a fucking stupid gig.

GINA: Your ears start bursting after three hours of very loud music.

Ah: Did you go to that?

VICKI: It was a farce. It was farcical. He was building up a whole load of expectations about getting rid of those expectations and in the end he just fulfilled them.



(contd.)

VICKI: ...like I mean, he came on behind a safety curtain...this big build up, this star build up and then as soon as the curtain went up he started slagging the audience off and saying 'You're only here because the media told you to come'

AH: What made you start?

GINA: We were going to watch music four or five times a week.

ANA: Then we decided that we wanted to have go. Gina and I, at the beginning wanted to have an all girls band so we had this band...only had one rehearsal, we didn't have instruments and couldn't play...that fell apart.

GINA: We took three or four photographs.

ANA: Then a lot of things happened and now we're all girls again.

AH: Is that a conscious thing?

VICKI: No.

AH: It seems stupid to make it conscious.

VICKI: Why?

AH: I don't see why one should make a group all of one sex.

VICKI: It creates opportunities for a start.

AH: How do you mean?

VICKI: I think it can be a good idea..and I'm not saying it is in this case...but I think it can be a good idea to have a group which is all women because it gives that many more chances for women to play.

AH: But to an extent it just creates a ghetto-like situation with lots of all women groups.

GINA: Yeah I tend not to agree.

VICKI: I think it's a stage you know it's not our aim, long term, to have all women groups but in order to get women involved in playing...I mean it's quite a good short term thing to...to create opportunities, like job creation, to create more space, more openings and eventually that won't be necessary.

AH: It seems that you get backlashes with all those things—anti-sexism and anti-racism, you can go too far in the other direction and get on the other side back.

ANA: We don't have that attitude at all. We have the band and we're all girls, it works really well I think.

GINA: It works the best it's ever worked, maybe because we're all women. It's difficult to say, but there's certainly a better atmosphere than there has ever been.

PAUL OLIVE: Maybe it's just four people who fit better.

ANA: Yeah it has a lot to do with what we are, not as women but as people.

AH: That's how it should be.

ANA: It's good because lots of other girls come to talk and they get really excited.

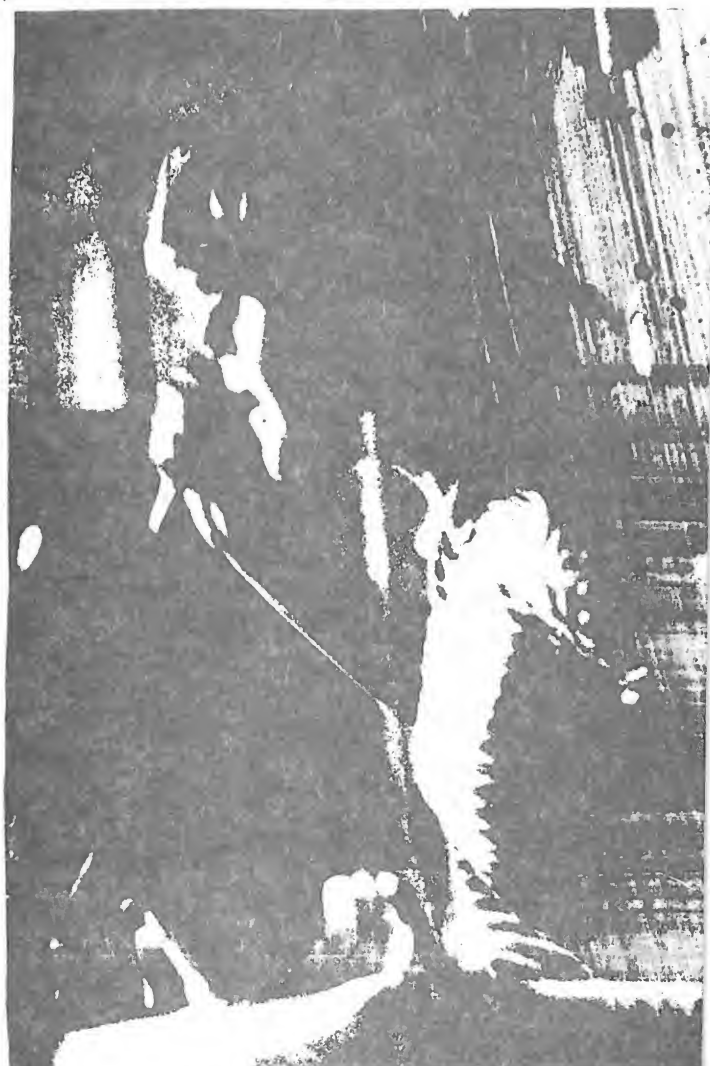
AH: But like with R.A.R. You get bad reggae and everyone feels that they have to say they're good just because they're black which is really prejudiced.

PAUL OLIVE: You get all the papers all the time, whenever they talk about the girl groups—'are they all female'.

GINA: They're really good for a girl group!

AH: They don't talk about the music.

VICKI: Yeah and also not being critical enough...they're scared to tread on our toes...but that's as stage as well...I think if people do it enough, then it's going to blow away those attitudes.



~~Doc~~ That's been one good thing about the punk thing as opposed to most of the other movements.

VICKI: Itsnot perfect,though its opened up a lot of avenues,but its still riddled, absolutely riddled with sexism,like it always has been.

ANA: Its sad that some women use..try to use'the cold feminine charm'...or show legs and breasts all over the place in order to make it,which happens quite a lot,but I suppose many guys act very butch as well.I think gradually it will disappear,it has disappeared in many areas.

JON: Its sad like guys still want to be like Jimmy Page or something,you know 'I'm in rock'n'roll to pull lots of birds'.

VICKI: Yeah,but then women want to be like Marlene Dietrich,they've got a tradition of sex symbols,men have got a tradition of..uh..strutting cocks....oh that reminds me of Jean-Jacques Burnel 'rock'n'roll is about cocks'

PALMOLIVE: People like that are terrible,normal guys aren't like that.That should be something of the past now.

CHARLES: How do you write your songs,do you write about ideas or specific events or both?

PALMOLIVE: The fruits of our imagination/alienation.

VICKI: Basically they are not really about events.

PALMOLIVE: Experiences, isn't it.

ANA: I think in a way its a bit similar,instead of talking about someone else,you're talking in a personal way,but you are still talking about someone,it doesn't really matter whether its you,you can always identify.It becomes a good song if people can identify with what you are saying,it doesn't mean they have to have the same experience exactly,but people can understand things that you say,and stuff like that,so both have the truth,you know...

JON: Which is your favourite song of the set?

PALMOLIVE: Today..'In Love',tomorrow..

GINA: ..the world.You mean the words?

JON: Well the whole thing...I find it interesting which of their songs people like best.. normally there's one song people shout for all the time..with you,maybe,'Fairytale In a Supermarket'..

ANA: As far as I'm concerned,of the ones that we've written,that is one of my favourites. But there are things in each one that I like...its difficult to say..

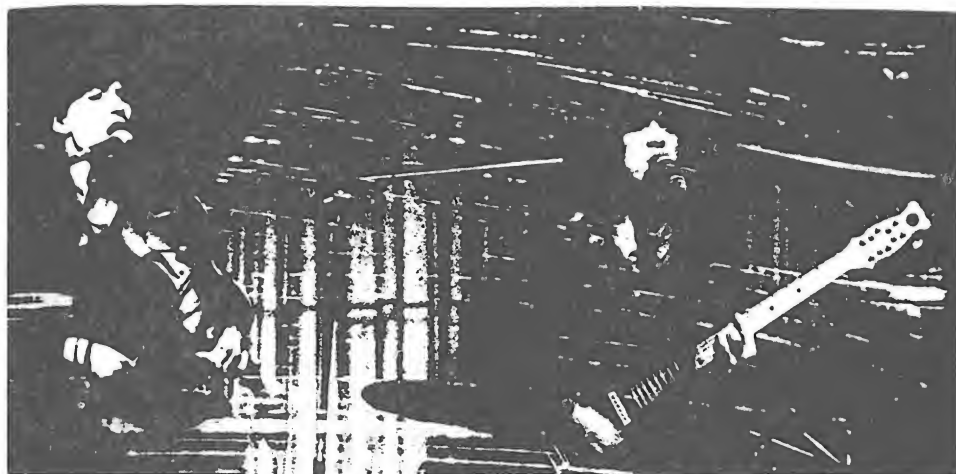
GINA: They do have ups and downs.

JON: Do you change your songs much?

GINA: We do at the moment.That's why the songs get together then fall apart again!

JON: Do you like the music papers?

GINA: Puke on the music press.



THE PREFECTS

This interview is with Rob-the singer. It was done after we'd seen The Fall. It's not very clear because he was drunk. This piece would have been much better if my tape recorder had not broken down half way through. I really like the Prefects. Make an effort to see them

The Prefects come from Birmingham. They are ROB-vocals and mouth organ, JOE-piano, guitar and voice, ROOTES-guitar and voice, and DUFFY-bass guitar. They are looking for a drummer. They have been together for two years and two months and in that time have written about sixty-five songs. The only ones that I can remember are Going Through The Motions, Total Luck, The Bristol Road Leads To Dachau, Agony Column, and Things In General.

'What are you're songs about? The Bristol Road Leads To Dachau for instance?'

'I'd like to think our fans will suss it out by themselves. If a fan reads something into it, then ^{that} C.K. by me. It's open to interpretation.'

They started off as a group who parodied various forms of music - Bowie, Elvis, Queen, Punk etc. but their own sound appeared.

'Joe likes drinking lager, chatting up birds in his local, listening to David Bowie and Eno and pretending to be a pop star. Rootes has a harem of women and he's into disco. Duffs into rockabilly, the Sweet, Gary Glitter, Van Halen and lots of H.M. bands...and he doesn't like it when we laugh about him being only five foot and bald.'

There is a possibility that they will be doing a single with Rough Trade shortly. Also they may be playing with the Raincoats in London and Birmingham.

'The Prefects are four blokes who have written a collection of songs which all four of us believe to be great songs, as good as, or better than most. So the band has learned how to play them, and at every opportunity has played them because we hope other people can like them as well.'

Did you used to be a chaotic shambles and are you now?

'The answer to that is - did we used to be a chaotic shambles? - No..Are we now - Yes.'

I hope you find this interesting. There will probably be a better piece in the next issue.

NEXT TIME

THE FALL MARK PERLY

GANG OF FOUR (Perhaps the PREFECTS)

AND OTHERS (Perhaps Crayola, Deep Bikes)

A SCRITTI POLITTI INTERVIEW

'FROM THE PRESSING PLANTS TO THE CONCERT HALLS
WE WANT SOME CONTROL'



JON: What then is Scritti Politti ?

GREEN: It bears a lot of resemblance to a beat group, a rock group, more than anything else in the world. What differentiates it from other beat groups is how it decides what it does, and then how it does it.

IAN: In that sense it doesn't resemble many other groups

GREEN: No, it doesn't resemble many other groups.

JON: Does it consist strictly of musicians?

GREEN: No, the idea is that substantial decisions about what the group is doing are made by a larger number of people than actually pick up instruments at present, and play and call themselves Scritti Politti. The group of people that are involved in the decision-making, some of them are involved in different projects, some are 'musical' and some aren't. It's an odd conglomerate of people.

JON: What does the name mean?

GREEN: The name was onomatopaeic, which means that it was chosen after we'd started rehearsing because it sounded like the noise we wanted to make. It was also chosen because it wasn't the Vips, the Nips, the Buzzes, the Vipers, the Spics, the Dickies or anything else like that. And the clincher was that we got it from a book of writings by a bloke called

Gramsci, who was Italian- political writings done while he was in prison. He was a hunch-back dwarf cripple who died in prison in the 1930's. Scritti Politti isn't the title of the book it's a bastardization of it. Politti is an English word, which is any group of individuals who get together for the purpose of working towards a set of aims.



JON: You have a set of aims?

GREEN: Yes

PAUL: Not defined as a written down set of aims.

NIAL: Not a grand plan.

JON: Are there certain things that you are working towards?

GREEN: We do have aims and one of the inbuilt elements of that set of aims is the sort of valve which says goals are never fixed.

JON: By aims you don't mean releasing 14 albums in the next three years, or whatever.

GREEN: No, the aims are not product-orientated in the historical or usual sense of rock groups' 'product', I don't think.

NIAL: They're very much couched in terms of the situation that we find ourselves in and the problems we find ourselves with.....and a lot of those problems we have in common with anyone else who is involved with production.

GREEN: So a lot of these problems aren't actually encountered at the stage of writing or performing a song per se, they're encountered elsewhere...by trying to...other aspects when you try and get together to make music, problems are chucked up all over the place.. problems of where the interphase between making music and the rest of your life comes, for instance. Problems of just the status...musician...beat group...

JON: Are there any things that you'd like to effect with your music?

GREEN: Yes, effected with our general practice, not just the music.

NIAL: Our music is part of that but in a lot of ways it is a very unquantifiable part... a very wispy grey part...because I think it is impossible to pin down how a piece of music works or what it means...because that is not constructed through our intentions as musicians, but is constructed socially through the people that we come into contact with.

GREEN: You can't decide that our music will mean this or that at all in the way that people think they can because as with everything else meaning is only established contextually.



JON: So do you want to try to influence the context.

GREEN: Yeah, that's the whole point, one of the most important things is trying to control the context better, so you almost begin to control the meaning of those aspects of music making that, up to the present, are uncontrollable and unquantifiable.

JON: So here you're going against the attitude of 'O.K. I've done the music, now it's up to everyone else'. You reject that?

GREEN: Yeah, I reject that because it's dumb and it leaves you...there's nothing you can say about your music that's any more the case than what anyone else should say about it.

JON: Even though you created it yourself?

GREEN: The problem is that you can have visions and play tunes and think that they're all hunky dory and someone or lots of people can reject it and say 'I don't like the tunes'. If that's all you are putting out, then the public can accept it or reject it according to taste, which leaves you with really not much effectiveness or control at all.

MATT: You're intentions don't come out of the vinyl as the music plays.

JON: So what are you trying to do about that?

GREEN: To deal with some of the...

NIAL: ...more easily identifiable..

GREEN: ...more easily understood concrete problems that people have when they try to make or control their own culture, which is why we are interested in the whole thing of trying to keep out of the sweaty palms of the record companies, interested in D.I.Y.



records, co-operation with other groups, seeing how far that can be taken, how large an alternative can be built, a positional alternative rather than a run-away-and-hide alternative.

JON: How do you see that alternative being better than what you've already got? Well it's not going to affect the fact that music is made... why do you see that it's better that music should be completely made by oneself... pressed by you, with the sleeve you drew yourself etc, etc, why is that better than that it should be perfectly pressed, with a flash sleeve all through W.E.A.

GREEN: Because it provides something to work on, I mean you are really challenging nothing and creating nothing if you just walk into a record company office and hand it all over to them and let them call all the stops.

JON: Creating nothing?

GREEN: You're making no new moves... you are not providing yourself with any problems, it would be very dull. Apart from that you have essential, I should imagine, objections to the likes of Warner Brothers controlling fucking great lumps of your culture and your life and that's thoroughly permeating and offensive in beat music.

JON: Yeah, I see that of course, but I don't quite see why the fact that there are more problems involved in doing it oneself is necessarily valuable.

NIAL: It's not a question of there being more problems, but the problems being different.

GREEN: It's a lot more difficult to survive.



NIAL: There are a lot of problems that you come up against when you are doing it yourself which you can build a control over or have a possibility of building a control over.

GREEN: and gain knowledge from.

NIAL: If you are signed to a big record company there is far less potential for coming to terms with those problems.

GREEN: You are talking about problems in a pragmatic way, I was saying that you are problematizing new areas, you are starting to talk about new areas, and they will chuck up new problems and new limits to be tested and tried, and that to me is of some worth as some basic thought plan of a project that is going to be interesting as opposed to complacent. Its going to disturb some thought, disturb some language, disturb some relationships and that's in keeping with the basic desire that we have to disturb complacency.

JON: Is that an aim, then, to disturb complacency?

GREEN: I think so.

NIAL: An aim as opposed to the aim.

GREEN: Its a large part of it, I mean, I wouldn't talk about it just as disturbing complacency.

JON: Are there any specific areas of complacency?

GREEN: Obviously the complacency that there is, at the moment, about what people like to call youth culture, and beat music. That is particularly annoying because those areas are always thought to be very, very lively and very liberating.

IAN: And very radical. Ha! Ha!

GREEN: And very radical, and in fact they are very conservative, very dumb, very safe, very boring and they pose no problems to anyone.

MATT: Which runs right through the music business, the papers, a lot of the audience, people don't try things.

JON: Do you see your music existing within a political framework?

GREEN: No, I'm not happy to be talked of as a political group in any way.

JON: But do you see what you are doing as having political implications

GREEN: Everything anyone does has political implications... its being aware of the social effect of what you are doing, or trying to think about it. You are thinking about what you are doing in terms of other beat groups, for instance, there are a lot of the problems that we tend to address ourselves to- the problems that other people trying to form groups come up against, because we think its very important that people should be in groups, and its the kind of area that we are beginning to gain some knowledge of, so we want to talk about it.

JON: Would you like to say something about the words on the single, as I don't think most people can make them out let alone work out what's going on?

GREEN: Its a mistake...a big problem, I think, is the idea that anything you say, any utterance in any song is necessarily about something. It has some sort of reference point - you know..there is the language, there is the reference in the real world..and its about that. I was thinking of certain things when I wrote it..the issues that are behind something like Skank Bloc Bologna won't immediately become obvious..not to everybody. Things like sexism, things like the messes that young people are in, especially in inner city areas, like the bad bits of London...some of the difference between that and what is happening in a city like Bologna...I wasn't trying to analyse that much..the way that answers aren't posed for young people in terms of anything that they are likely to encounter in their lives..also when I wrote it the Clash had a big interview in the N.M.E. and they said they felt like the Magnificent 7 - a bunch of outlaws that would come into town to put everything to rights, and the last bit was something to do with that overestimation, the ability of a beat group to ride into town and put everything right, the idea of a beat group as macho gunslingers, the Robin Hoods of today, or some such silly overromanticised notion of that, and it was a bit to do with our own overestimations as well. Obviously that doesn't come across in any kind of literal way, but there's an attempt to make more reference points in one song than the old-fashioned way of treating song layout which is like treating songs like having conversations - like you've got three minutes in which you want to stick a lot of references in, and then try and create a kind of feeling...and that feeling becomes amplified through repetition - the rest of what you do...you don't try...We are trying...recognising that songs aren't conversations or political tracts, and a new way of writing, of using language is necessary to maximise the potential...new rules of syntax if you like.....

,,,what do you think is wrong with what has been said so far, Bob?

BOB: One of the major problems is that we have all got to know each other and its all a bit comfortable..we're all sitting in the pub...I think what one of our problems is that...a lot of what we talk about...is that there are no blueprints for anything...and people often take that as a blueprint in itself...people often say 'oh they're just hedging in their answers, they're just hedging about political bands, about the lyrics' all the things you have talked about you've not given any real answers to

GREEN: Its sounded a bit hacky so far, which is not something of our choosing.



GREEN: Something that's struck me ..trying to think out very carefully what you say .. people try and label you as an intellectual or as an intellectual group, which stinks.

GREEN: The idea of people making music, quickly without much fuss-with lots of energy, is still very important. One of the results of that is you get lots of groups that are usually quite shambolic..very scratchy-collapsy, we actively like things like that - things that crop up as mistakes in people's music..like the Desperate Bicycles and the Raincoats, we enjoy very much the enthusiastic, stop-start mistakes, falling over sound they have. It isn't fetishising mistakes. I wouldn't enthuse over somebody getting up and playing Hendrix guitar over a bad version of White Riot just because it was easy it was cheap. I'd tell them to fuck off. Because what it doesn't have the substantial backing of new ideas delivered with any kind of commitment.

CHARLES: You said that you were interested in trying to test new areas that haven't been tried before. What are they?

GREEN: I suppose they generally come under the heading of self determination in beat music and that throws up all sorts of areas, that haven't been attempted before. I don't mean self-determination in any silly hippy or anarchist way. Ideas of broadening out.. the record wasn't such an enormously fixed part of what we do, i.e. it would be quite interesting if we made a release... like a piece of writing - like Skank Bloc was Scrit 1 and a piece of writing would be Scrit 2, and I don't mean in any kind of Bob Last corny way, and we'd send it to the singles page to be reviewed. And then there'll be all sorts of different stages of production, different types of production, that could be mailed in, and the conversation could be broadened in that way. The problem with that is you get the feeling that a lot of people would send in wanky videos and arty-facts, you know, and all sorts of shite - bags with orange peel in them.

Meeting Scritti Politti has led to a reconsideration of many things. I was vacant, I didn't think about things that I thought I was really interested in. Talk is essential because it provokes thought which provokes talk which... I have talked to Scritti Politti and through them others. It has made me feel inadequate but made me want to change that. Thought and conversation sometimes provide solutions/aims/ideas but more often (for me) frustration and confusion. But better to know of a collection of viewpoints than of just one. Awareness better than naivete. Scritti Politti are aware, interesting, provocative, and a group with a desire to change those parts of the music world which make it the scummy, dirty, sad world that it appears when looked at with a critical eye. Scritti Politti are concerned about rock'n'roll/beat, music.

If you get the chance, don't hesitate to talk to them. On tour with the Red Crayola around late March/early April. See them.

Charles

RED CRAYOLA & SCRITTI POLITTI TOUR DATES.

MARCH F. 23rd Nottingham.
S. 24th cheltenham.
S. 25th
M. 26th Rugby.
T. 27th
W. 28th Altringham.
T. 29th Oxford.
F. 30th London.
S. 31st Manchester.
S. 1st
M. 2nd Lancaster.
T. 3rd Birmingham.
W. 4th York.
T. 5th London.



WEDNESDAY 1/3/79 10:30 p.m.

Writing a magazine about rock and roll, why? Torn between writing about myself and my response to rock and roll and attempting to write impersonally, to simply report without prejudice, inasmuch as that is possible. Oh rock'n'roll, rock'n'roll doncha just love it, ah to hell with objectivity here we go with a few personal thoughts that i hope may benefit you, the reader, in some fashion (if i think something maybe you'll think something?)

Records i've been listening to recently: a borrowed copy of I'm the One by Annette Peacock, a genuine musician with commitment and much control music that doesn't discriminate between body and soul: YIK-YAK by the current Red Crayola-straight to the head of the artist: Spector/Motown, Ronettes/Marvian Mar, pop music and we don't have to worry boys!: and all the old favourites Patti Smith, an American star who certainly is guilty, the Velvets-a true beat group with a passion, and Nico who is more extreme.

Not many recent records, don't forget Simon & Garfunkel though, but much great live music. Thinking about recent records, i just heard the Pop Group (5 young artists from Bristol who think they can change things from the ground up) single, read Ian Penman's N.M.E. review for an opinion, it's a bit of a let down, but, for what it's worth(?), the music is sharply disturbing, the lyrics are just images (words disobey me eh!, Mark). Live music, as i say is a different story. The Pop Vibe is hard now that we need you, Scritti Politti (imminently live) and the other acts are adequately covered elsewhere. The Vincent Units/Tesco Bombers support the Raincoats a lot and threaten when they're joking. I saw the Fall again the other night and rediscovered why they're the only group i've ever seen that i'd love to roadie for let alone play for, a true crossover group, between heart and soul, mind and intellect, emotion and feeling, dancing and DANCING. Hurts to say it but the Mekons were like a rock group at the Nashville, competent and professional and whatever happened to the raison d'etre (teenage angst to you?).

The musician must take full responsibility for all her/his actions, it is not enough to just play your/my music man, or to say what i/you think, one must consider all the implications of all our actions in all areas of your/my life. More of this in an extended piece on Scritti Politti and other matters in the next issue.

Um...it was quite easy, it was pretty cheap go and do it...you know it makes sense etc.etc.

At least think about it, think about reading this, it may be too much like hard work, but there are new ways of having fun.

jon



PragVEC	London
Fireplace	Manchester
Superman	General release
Wayne Kramer	London

'when I was younger so much younger than today...'

This is not a review. The above mentioned spring to mind, that's all. I saw Prag VEC at the Railway Inn a few weeks ago. A group. Theirs was a lonely sound. The people there were so eager but as lonely as the Railway Inn sounds. It is London play and players, standing around, check around. buy a round... So many individuals all trying to keep up with something that simply does not exist.

The group plays round sort of music with the odd structural quirk. People listen as if interested. When she sings the highly conventional songs, words, so many, applied slap on top and over the top of the music - group music of a not uneventful kind (post-punk Hatfield and the North, someone was moved to muse) it all becomes rather ho-hum. The prevailing mood is, however, one of subliminal reverence. This is strangely at variance with the cut of the audience's jibe. Impassionate wavers. A Wireman wanders.

It's not Pop or Not-Pop nor willfully avoiding the two. A good thing? -London.

Fireplace. Contrary or consequently to these scenes is a Manchester based group playing, at this point, their second performance. Actually, it is as support to the Adverts, but the less said about that the better. Affected and effective (as is much invigorating recent electric group music - once it has been established that what you are not desirous of and aiming for is the bluff straight from the heart (or head) condition, the exemplification of creation is clearer and intent sharper. This lateral music stumbles among possible functions. It does not need portent - its design is its only design; but what chance to find one letter in the true, unknowable name? Such good rhythmic tunneling - atmosphere in The Factory a low hum, but it's there, self generative; nobody has told this gathering if it's O.K. to like the band, it doesn't matter much in Manchester anyway.

What resonance with Superman?

Not so much a film as the attempted realisation of a real myth of some considerable standing. The expertise to make convincing the power and the glory of this fitfully 'not of this world', proud, upstanding individual, who happens to believe in The American Way, is now available and the fiscal possibilities involved in such out and out technology spectacle proven. Thus S. Man manifests itself.

The man's integrity is enormous, yet his quite astonishing cartoon ambience undermines the inherently admirable personal manifesto, albeit a cartoon manifesto, he represents. The non 'real-life' status of this particular man-made myth i.e. his genesis in comics, gives him a great deal more ideological clout, however. This is no mere revolutionary or establishment hero - this is a completely mythological composite of an acceptable absurd deity.

He warmed the latent lust for life, ascendant-life in the most charming, non-didactic fashion. a flying metaphor seen with pleasure and registered as a wondrous ideal for one's cartoon life.

The voyeuristic catharsis provided by the sight and sound of person or persons in greatly anxious situations, which in Superman are always resolved, is a noted crucial part of many (most?) successful films, particularly in the last five years. This reminds me of Iggy on stage, acting out a vaudeville eschatology to the evident delight of watchers - we appear to need these things.

And in Camden, nothing stirs. Today stupid sunshine shines vacuous over everything, last night the delirious fleshtone hyper-appalling Dingbats 'crew' hung around a 'gig' by XMC5 Wayne Kramer-guitar. Now, guitar, yes-an axiomatic axe; raw power with ease, too much ease? The man and his songs were highly anachronistic and try as I did to avoid seeing the overtly exploited mechanisms of the bicycling 'high-energy' show (piece) the effect was distastful. Twixt song 'raps', as I believe they are known were extraordinary-bloated self-important dumb-truths. The combination of American polito-rock-speak-crapola being spouted in a showpiece (mantlepiece) four man bang bang WCCC rock group by an ex-coke dealing renegade (he was caught, that's all), and the sloppy, sedentary real blanks that are the rock biz coop and its hangers-on and hangers-off, was enough to drive one to drink-but I'd run out of money.

An evening when rock and roll's limitations and deformities become manifest en masse. Camden and Hampstead become one. Any conception of rock and roll as more than a good beat become laughable.

JOHN
LIPNICKI

